FP unit 1 - Lecture notes 1

forensic (Bharathiar University)

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FORENSIC AND CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY

UNIT I : Forensic science: Definition – History and Development of Forensic Science – Scope Forensic Science – Need of Forensic Science – Basic Principles of Forensic Science – Tools and techniques of Forensic Science – Professional training and education in forensic psychology – Forensic Psychology in India – Ethical and legal issues in Forensic practice.

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"Forensic Science means any science which is used as evidence in a court of law. It is also taken to mean scientific analysis and comparison used in the detection and investigation of crime."

The word forensic is derived from the **Latin** adjective **"forensis"** meaning "**of or before the forum**". In ancient Roman society, cases involving criminal charges were presented before a group of individuals in the forum. Both the victim and suspect would give speeches on their side of the story. The best argument would determine the outcome of the case.

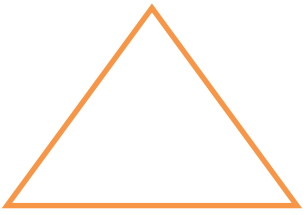
A broad definition of Forensic Science:-Forensic science involves the "collection, preservation and validation of evidence" as well as the "investigation and analysis of the data, and the preparation of a report for the authorities."

"Forensic science can prove the guilt or innocence of the defendant in criminal law, and it can help to resolve a broad spectrum of legal issues in civil actions through the identification, analysis and evaluation of physical and other evidence. An accurate forensic science definition extends beyond the traditional concept of science and may include the areas of accounting, psychological testing and interpretation of data and other evidence."

Forensic Provides Guilt (Responsibility for wrong doing)…….

Motive

Who, What, Where, When, how?



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Forensic psychology

The professional practice by psychologists within the areas of clinical psychology, counseling psychology, neuropsychology, and school psychology, when they are engaged regularly as experts and represent themselves as such, in an activity primarily intended to provide professional psychological expertise to the judicial system.

Criminal Psychology

Criminal psychology, also referred to as criminological **psychology**, is the study of the will, thoughts, intentions, and reactions of **criminals** and all that partakes in the **criminal** behavior. It is related to the field of **criminal** anthropology.

Difference between criminal and forensic psychologist

Although they both work closely with the legal system, criminal and forensic psychologists have different focuses. While both professionals generally have a doctorate in psychology, a criminal psychologist evaluates criminals exclusively. A forensic psychologist, by contrast, works with all types of court cases, including civil matters not involving criminals. Much of a criminal psychologist's work is done on a theoretical basis, before a perpetrator has even been identified, while a forensic psychologist tends to evaluate persons already identified by the courts.

HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

A BIT HISTORY…….

Early origins of 'forensics' appear in ancient Egypt and later in Mesopotamia.

In the 6th century first book in forensic medicine in China, followed by the first forensic textbook in 12th century

Office of the coroner was established in England in the 9th century

SOME KNOWN AND LESS KNOWN HISTORIC FIGURES IN DEVELOPMENT OF FORENSICS.

Mathieu Orfilathe father of **toxicology**, he wrote about the detection of poisons & their effects on animals.

AlphonseBertillon the father of **Anthropometry**.Developed a system to distinguish one individual person from another based on certain body measurements.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in late 1800's ppopularized scientific crime-detection methods through his fictional character.

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Edmond Locard-Father of the "**Crime Lab**" In 1910, he started the 1st crime lab in an attic of a police station. With few tools, he quickly became known world-wide to forensic scientists & criminal investigators & eventually founded the *Institute of Criminalistics* in France.His most important contribution was the

"Locard'sExchangePrinciple

"Every Contact Leaves a Trace."

He believed that every criminal can be connected to a crime by particles carried from the crime scene.

When a criminal comes in contact with an object or person, a cross-transfer of evidence occurs.

J. Edgar Hoover

Director of Federal Bureau of Investigation during the 1930's

Hoover's leadership spanned 48 yrs & 8 presidential administrations. His reign covered Prohibition, the Great Depression, WWII, the Korean War, the Cold War, & the Vietnam War.

He organized a national laboratory to offer forensic services to all law enforcement agencies in the U.S.

VERY CONTROVERSIAL-He exceeded & abused his authority with unjustified investigations & illegal wiretaps based on political beliefs rather than suspected criminal activity.FBI directors are now limited to 10-year terms.

From the days of Sherlock Holmes, to the TV show CSI, the world is enchanted by forensic science. The use of science to catch criminals is not only captivating, but also incredibly powerful. Forensic science is a very large field, with a long history of application, and even in more recent times, development of increasingly sensitive and specific analysis methods allow analysis of even the smallest traces of evidence.

The first recorded autopsy was that of Julius Caesar in 44BC, and it was in the 15th century that the first forensics textbook was produced. In that textbook is one of the first uses of science to identify a murder weapon.

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A murder was committed and the trial judge ordered all the sickles in the village be confiscated. Only one sickle attracted flies, leading the judge to conclude it was due to the scent of the blood, and this was the murder weapon.

In the 1540's the French doctor Ambroise Paré laid the foundations for modern forensic pathology through his study of trauma on human organs. The 19th century saw a forensic revolution. In the 1820s Eugène François Vidocq pioneered the first use of ballistics and began taking plaster casts of shoe imprints. In the 1830s the chemist James Marsh used standard scientific testing to determine that a man murdered his grandfather by arsenic poisoning, and this assay is now known as the Marsh test.

The 1890s saw the first use of the Henry System for fingerprint classification. Around the same time, Edmund Locard developed the 12 matching points for fingerprint comparison. He also is responsible for one of the principle tenets of forensic science, that of "every contact leaves a trace". This is known as the Locard Exchange Principle and has formed the foundation of trace evidence collection and analysis for over a century and still plays a central role in 21st century forensic science.

The first method for determining ABO blood groups for dried bloodstains was developed in 1910, which immediately became a useful tool for crime scene investigations. In the 1920s, Dr Calvin Goddard used comparison microscopy to compare shell casings from the scene of the St Valentine's Day Massacre, which led to a raid on Al 'Scarface' Capone's home and the recovery of two of the weapons from the crime.

The late 1980s and 1990s saw the development of DNA profiling, and the establishment of DNA databases such as CODIS, which can be used for comparison of DNA profiles recovered from crime scenes and suspects. As well as DNA, the last 10 years has seen improvements in fingerprinting methods, portable crime labs, and increased use of chemical analysis for everything from explosive identification to analysis of dyes and inks.

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The History of Forensic Psychology

Compared to other areas of psychology, forensic psychology has a relatively short history, dating back roughly to the late nineteenth century. In the early days, this type of psychology was actually not referred to as forensic psychology, and most of the psychologists conducting research in the area did not formally identify themselves as forensic psychologists. However, their research formed the building blocks of an emerging field of psychology that continues to be strong today.

1843- Daniel M'Naughten is found not guilty by reason of insanity in the assassination attempt on the British prime minister. This leads to the development of the "M'Naughten rule" for determining insanity.

1893- James McKeen Cattell of Columbia University conducts the first experiments in North America on the psychology of testimony.

1896- One of the earliest examples of a psychologist testifying in a criminal trial. Albert von Schrenck-Notzing's testimony deals with the effect of pretrial publicity on memory.

1908- Hugo Munsterberg's *On the Witness Stand* is published in the United States. A year later, John H. Wigmore's famous critique of Munsterberg's work appears.

1909–1913- In a series of articles, Guy Whipple introduces North American psychologists to the classic European experiments on eyewitness testimony.

1911- Julian Varendonck conducts a series of classic studies on the suggestibility of children in order to inform his courtroom testimony on the reliability of child witnesses.

1917- William Marston develops the first modern polygraph. In the same year, Louis Terman pioneers the use of psychological testing for personnel selection in U.S. law enforcement agencies.

1921- In *State v. Driver,* a North American psychologist testifies in court as an expert witness for the first time. However, the testimony is rejected.

1923- In *Frye v. United States,* the courts speak specifically to the issue of when expert testimony should be admissible.

1954 - A brief written by social psychologists is cited in a footnote of the famous *Brown v. Board of Education* decision outlawing school segregation. The citation helps validate psychology as a discipline.

1964- Famous personality psychologist, Hans. J. Eysenck, publishes *Crime and Personality* in which he proposes his biosocial theory of crime, viewed by some as the first testable theory of criminal behavior proposed by a psychologist.

1968–1969- The American Psychology-Law Society (AP-LS) is founded. A few years later, the AP-LS journal *Law and Human Behavior* begins publication.

1980-1981- The American Psychological Association's (APA) Division 41, Psychology and Law, is established. Four years later, AP-LS merges with Division 41.

1993- *In Daubert v. Merrell Dow Pharmaceuticals Inc.,* the U.S. Supreme Court lays out specific criteria for determining when scientific evidence can be admitted.

2001- The American Psychological Association formally recognizes forensic psychology as a specialty discipline.

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SCOPE OF FORENSIC SCIENCE:-

- SHORTAGE OF FORENSIC EXPERTS IN INDIA AND SCOPE-

1. According to crime statistics of "Bureau of Police Research and Development (BPRD)"- A total of 19,89,673 IPC crimes were reported in the country during the year 2007 as against 18,78,293 in 2006, showing an increase of 5.9 percent in 2007.
2. According to Hindustan Times - Over three million cases are pending in India's 21 high courts, and an astounding 26.3 million cases are pending in subordinate courts across the country.
3. At the same time, there are almost a quarter million under-trials languishing in jails across the country. Of these, some 2,069 have been in jail for more than five years, even as their guilt or innocence is yet to be ascertained.
4. There are lot of cases which need not always go to the police or courts. Most experts agree that India faces an acute shortage of trained Forensic Experts and Scientists in many Forensic Areas and Crime Investigation.
5. Forensic science is an applied science having more than 27 sub branches. This subject is concerned with application of scientific principles / techniques for the crime investigation. Any science used for the purposes of the law is a forensic science.
6. Forensic scientists handle various clues collected from crime scene and use latest and advanced techniques to convert these clues into evidences which are later produced in court for prosecutions of the criminals.
7. As there is increase in the rate of organized crime the task of Forensic scientists is becoming more tough, challenging and adventurous. Forensic science is a highly remunerative career options for youngsters.
8. There is an acute shortage of qualified Forensic Experts, Scientists and Investigators in the India. Forensic Scientists help to reduce the number of cases entering the overloaded court system by assisting the decision-makers before a case reaches the court. So, there is wide scope for jobs, private work, own practice etc

SCOPE AND CAREER OF FORENSIC SCIENCES:

Govt. Sector	Police Department, Crime Branches, CBI, CID, Forensic Science Laboratories, IB, Banks, Defense/Army, Courts, Quality Control Bureau, Narcotics Dept., Universities, Hospitals, Organizations etc...
Private Sector	Detective Agencies, Banks, Insurance Companies, Universities, Hospitals, Security Services Agencies, Helpful to Lawyers/Advocates, Law Firms, Private Companies, Own Private Practice etc...
Job Titles / Posts	Forensic Expert, Forensic Scientist, Forensic Investigator, Crime Scene Investigator, Handwriting Expert, Document Expert, Document Examiner, Fraud Examiner, Forensic Analyst, Scientific Officer, Security Expert, Forensic

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	Consultant, Detective, Investigating Officer, Teacher / Professor, Crime Reporter, Forensic Engineer, Forensic Psychologist, Fingerprint Expert, Law Consultant, Government Examiner, Instructor, Genetics Experts, Environment Analyst, Technicians, Forensic Medical Examiners, Technician etc...
Courses / Degree	B. Sc. / M. Sc. / Diploma / Certification / Doctorate etc in Forensic Science, Criminology, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Science, Commerce, Law, Psychology, Information Technology, Computer etc (Depend on Job / Post requirements)

NEED FOR FORENSIC SCIENCE:

- To the Identification of Criminals or Victims
- To the Identification of perpetrator
- To conducting a damage assessment
- To Preserve the evidence for legal action
- Everything is material need great care & accuracy
- To establish facts with evidence. Working documents must withstand detailed scrutiny.
- To establish a detailed examination or enquiry
- Internal audit approach may be used
- Legal resource is not presumed.
- To the Identification of method /vulnerability
- To solve Mysteries
    - Past crimes (unsolved or wrongfully convicted)
    - Cause, Location, Time of Death
    - Paternity cases
- Cyber crimes
- Corporate Crimes
- Voice Analysis
- Application of DNA as evidence
- Catastrophes (any large and disastrous event of great significance)& Wars
    - ID remains of victims (either civilian or soldiers)
    - ex. Holocaust or Katrina
- Military & International Forensics

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- Terrorism
- The search for WMD's(Weapons of Mass Destruction)
- Stockpiled or stored weapons from past wars

PRINCIPLES OF FORENSIC SCIENCE

- **Law of individuality**(*Every object, natural or man-made, has an individuality which is not duplicated in any other object)*
- **Principle of exchange (Locard's principle)-***When 2 objects come in contact, there is always exchange of material*
- **Law of progressive change-***Everything changes with the passage of time*
- **Principle of comparison-***Only the likes can be compared*
- **Principle of analysis-***The analysis can be no better than the sample itself*
- **Law of probability**
- **Facts do not lie**-'*Facts do not lie, men can and do 'facts can also be created!*

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES USED IN FORENSIC SCIENCE

Tool kit for a forensic scientist (Crime scene)

Those forensic scientists required to find, collect, protect and transport evidence from the crime scene require a kit of tools to use. Although each forensic scientist may do things a little differently, there are typical tools that they all use. These are:

- Crime scene tape to secure the scene and the area around which the crime took place.
- Camera and film to photograph scene and evidence. Gauges to place in photos to allow for recording of scale.
- Sketchpad and pens for scene sketches.
- Disposable and protective clothing (overall suits), face masks and gloves (usually latex gloves).

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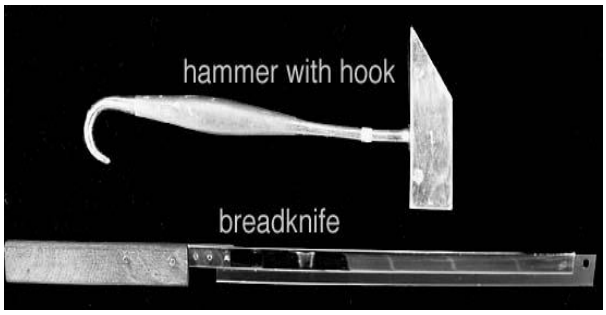
- Torch.
- Other light sources such as laser, ultra violet (UV) and infrared (IR) lighting. These different lights can uncover certain types of evidence that normal torchlight won't.
- Magnifying glass to help with finding trace evidence.
- Tweezers for collecting evidence such as hair and fibres.
- Cotton wool buds (cotton swabs) for collecting samples of fluid evidence.
- Evidence bags (paper and plastic) and evidence tubes (plastic and glass) and marker pen to label evidence. This assists in keeping evidence uncontaminated and allows for safe and easy transport to the lab.
- Fingerprint supplies – this includes things like ink, print cards, lifting tape, dusting powders (there are a variety of these for different situations) and exposing reagents (such as luminol). Casting kits for making casts of shoe/footwear prints, animal prints, tyres and tool markings.
- Serology kit for collecting blood.
- Entomology kit for collecting and preserving insect evidence.
- Hazard kit for handling hazardous materials/evidence.

TOOLS REQUIRED WHILE DOING AUTOPSY……

- Forensic scientists use the autopsy table for holding and fixing the corpse.
- They use carbon dioxide to preserve the corpse to prevent it from decomposing.
- Dissection scissors are used for holding or moving structures.
- Ropes are used for tying the corpse in fixed position during dissection.
- Forensic scientists use autopsy saws and blades to cut the skin or hard parts such as bones.
- A speculum is used for vaginal and rectal examinations. A fingerprint set is used to collect fingerprints.



TECHNOLOGIES

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1. Laser Ablation Inductively Coupled Plasma Mass Spectrometry (LA-ICP-MS) : When broken glass is involved in a crime, putting together even tiny pieces can be key to finding important clues like the direction of bullets, the force of impact or the type of weapon used in a crime. Through its highly sensitive isotopic recognition ability, the LA-ICP-MS machine breaks glass samples of almost any size down to their atomic structure. Then, forensic scientists are able to match even the smallest shard of glass found on clothing to a glass sample from a crime scene. In order to work with this type of equipment in conjunction with forensic investigation,.

2. Alternative Light Photography : For a forensic nurse, being able to quickly ascertain how much physical damage a patient has suffered can be the difference between life and death. Although they have many tools at their disposal to help make these calls quickly and accurately, Alternative Light Photography is one of the coolest tools to help see damage even before it is visible on the skin. A camera such as the Omni chrome uses blue light and orange filters to clearly show bruising below the skin's surface.It is useful in Forensic nursing.

3. High-Speed Ballistics Photography : You might not think of it right away as a tool for forensic scientists, but ballistics specialists often use high-speed cameras in order to understand how bullet holes, gunshot wounds and glass shatters are created. Virtually anyone, from a crime scene investigator to a firearms examiner, can operate a high-speed camera without any additional education or training. Being able to identify and match bullet trajectories, impact marks and exit wounds must be done by someone with at least a Bachelor's of Science in Forensic Science.

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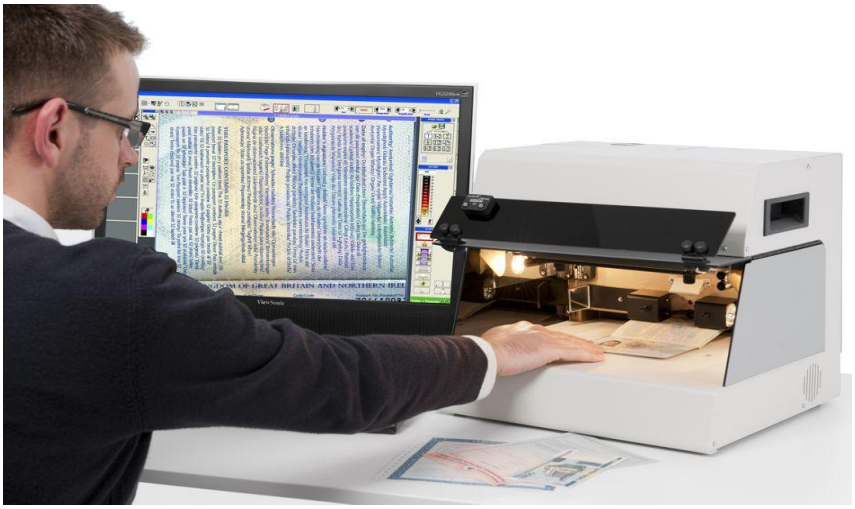
4. Video Spectral Comparator 2000 : For crime scene investigators and forensic scientists, this is one of the most valuable forensic technologies available anywhere. With this machine, scientists and investigators can look at a piece of paper and see obscured or hidden writing, determine quality of paper and origin and "lift" indented writing. It is sometimes possible to complete these analyses even after a piece of paper has been so damaged by water or fire that it looks unintelligible to the naked eye. In order to run this equipment, at least a Bachelors degree in Forensic Science or a Master's Degree in Document Analysis is usually required.



5. Digital Surveillance For Xbox (XFT Device) : Most people don't consider a gaming system a potential place for hiding illicit data, which is why criminals have come to use them so much. In one of the most ground-breaking forensic technologies for digital forensic specialists, the XFT is being developed to allow authorities visual access to hidden files on the Xbox hard drive. The XFT is also set up to record access sessions to be replayed in real time during court hearings. In order to be able to access and interpret this device, a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Forensics is necessary.

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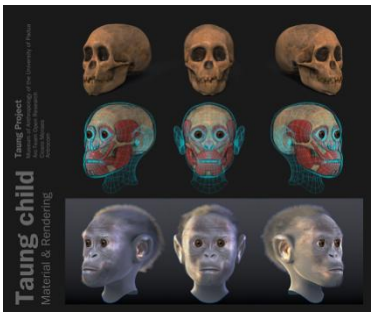
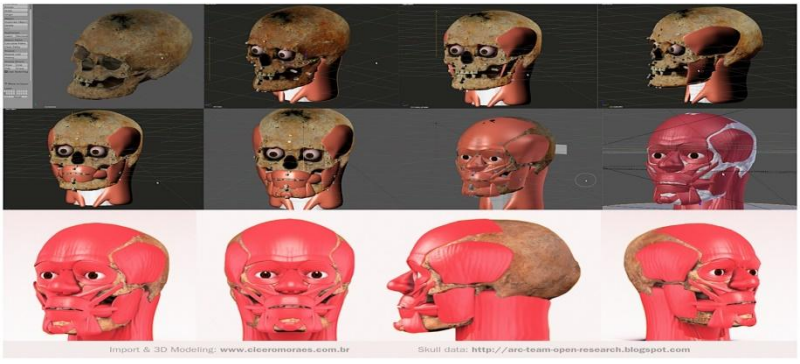
6. 3D Forensic Facial Reconstruction : Although this forensic technology is not considered the most reliable, it is definitely one of the most interesting available to forensic pathologists, forensic anthropologists and forensic scientists. In this technique, 3D facial reconstruction software takes a real-life human remains and extrapolates a possible physical appearance. In order to run this type of program, you should have a Bachelor's Degree in Forensic Science, a Master's Degree in Forensic Anthropology or a Medical Degree with an emphasis on Forensic Examination and Pathology.





7. DNA Sequencer: Most people are familiar with the importance of DNA testing in the forensic science lab. Still, most people don't know exactly what DNA sequences are and how they may be used. Most forensic scientists and crime lab technicians use what's called DNA profiling to identify criminals and victims using trace evidence like hair or skin samples. In cases where those samples are highly degraded, however, they often turn to the more powerful DNA sequence, which allows them to analyze old bones or teeth to determine the

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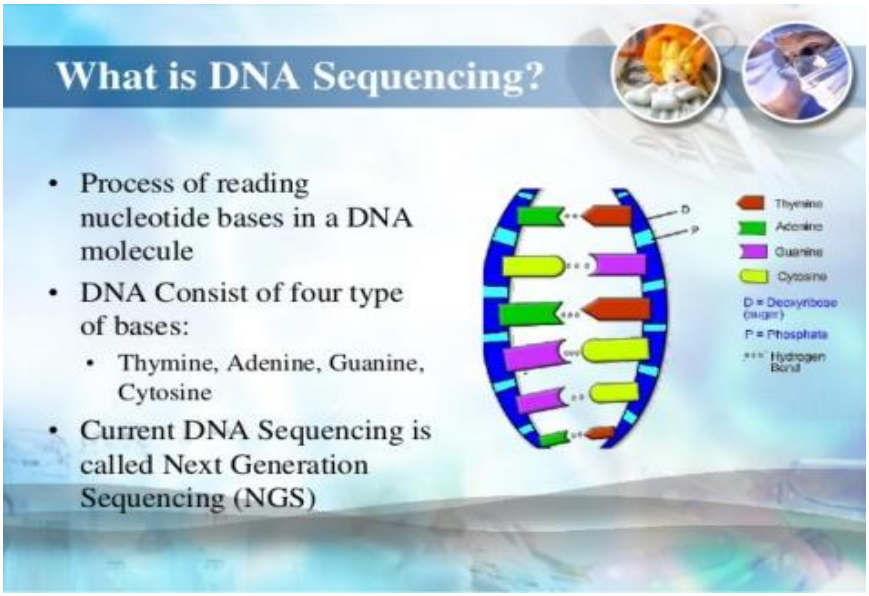
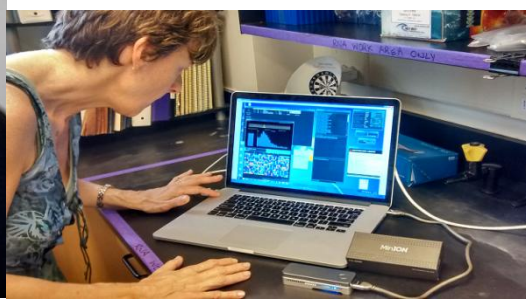
specific ordering of a person's DNA nucleon bases, and generate a "read" or a unique DNA pattern that can help identify that person as a possible suspect or criminal.





8.Forensic Carbon-14 Dating : Carbon dating has long been used to identify the age of unknown remains for anthropological and archaeological findings. Since the amount of radiocarbon (which is calculated in a Carbon-14 dating) has increased and decreased to distinct levels over the past 50 years, it is now possible to use this technique to identify forensic remains using this same tool. The only people in the forensic science field that have ready access to Carbon-14 Dating equipment are forensic scientists, usually with a Master's Degree in Forensic Anthropology or Forensic Archaeology.

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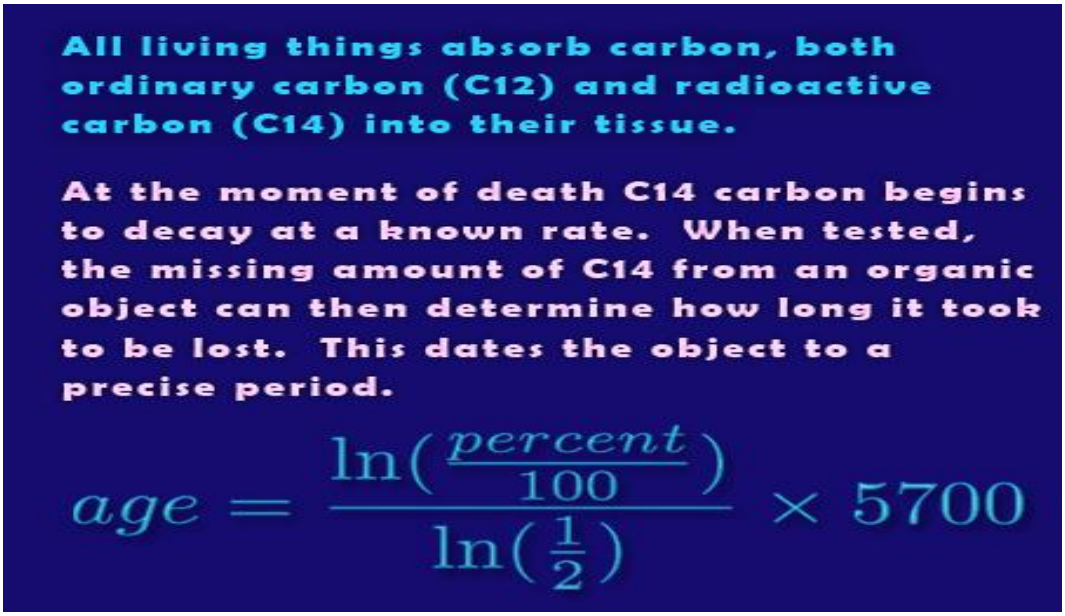
All living things absorb carbon, both ordinary carbon (C12) and radioactive carbon (C14) into their tissue.
At the moment of death C14 carbon begins to decay at a known rate. When tested, the missing amount of C14 from an organic object can then determine how long it took to be lost. This dates the object to a precise period.
$age = \frac{\ln(\frac{percent}{100})}{\ln(\frac{1}{2})} \times 5700$

9. Magnetic Fingerprinting and Automated Fingerprint Identification (AFIS) : With these forensic technologies, crime scene investigators, forensic scientists and police officers can quickly and easily compare a fingerprint at a crime scene with an extensive virtual database. In addition, the incorporation of magnetic fingerprinting dust and no-touch wanding allows investigators to get a perfect impression of fingerprints at a crime scene without contamination. While using AFIS requires only an Associates Degree in Law Enforcement, magnetic fingerprinting usually requires a Bachelor's Degree in Forensic Science or Crime Scene Investigation.

10. Link Analysis Software for Forensic Accountants : When a forensic accountant is trying to track illicit funds through a sea of paperwork, link analysis software is an invaluable tool to help highlight strange financial activity. This software combines observations of unusual digital financial transactions, customer profiling and statistics to generate probabilities of illegal behavior. In order to accurately understand and interpret findings with this forensic technology, a Master's Degree in Forensic Accounting is necessary.

COMPUTER FORENSIC TOOLS:- Computer forensics is a very important branch of computer science in relation to computer and Internet related crimes. Earlier, computers were only used to produce data but now it has expanded to all devices related to digital data. The goal of Computer forensics is to perform crime investigations by using evidence from digital data to find who was the responsible for that particular crime.

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For better research and investigation, developers have created many computer forensics tools. Police departments and investigation agencies select the tools based on various factors including budget and available experts on the team.

These computer forensics tools can also be classified into various categories:

- Disk and data capture tools
- File viewers
- File analysis tools
- Registry analysis tools
- Internet analysis tools
- Email analysis tools
- Mobile devices analysis tools
- Mac OS analysis tools
- Network forensics tools
- Database forensics tools

FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

Definition:-

"Forensic psychology is the professional practice by psychologists within the areas of clinical psychology, counseling psychology, school psychology or another specialty recognized by the American Psychological Association, when they are engaged as experts and represent themselves as such, in an activity primarily intended to provide professional psychological expertise to the judicial system."

What are the Responsibilities of a Forensic Psychologist?

There are a wide variety of job responsibilities for forensic psychologists, however, jobs often relate to the criminal justice system. In the judicial system, forensic psychologists play a vital role in shedding light on the mental functioning of defendants. They may be called by prosecutors or defense attorneys to evaluate a defendant, provide a psychological assessment, and testify on their findings in court. These assessments can range from evaluating the presence of a psychological disorder to determining if the defendant has diminished mental capacity. Forensic psychologists will often work with victims of crime as well, both in an investigative and a therapeutic capacity. They often conduct investigations into child abuse, elder abuse, and domestic violence, and offer treatments to victims of such crimes after the fact.

As mentioned above, developing psychological profiles of criminals is just one of many job duties of the forensic psychologist. Profiling involves much research, including an examination of crime scene evidence for clues as to the offender's physical characteristics, such as age, weight, and race, as well as the motivation for committing the crime. Part of the profiling process is helping direct law enforcement agencies toward potential offenders, as well as making recommendations for effective strategies to interrogate suspects.

Forensic psychologists also work in correctional settings. In this capacity, primary duties include conducting screenings and assessments on inmates, administering court-ordered psychological evaluations, and consulting with attorneys, advocates, prison staff, or judicial personnel on the mental well-being of inmates. Forensic psychologists might also provide mental health care to inmates in the form of group therapies, such as substance abuse treatment or anger management, as well as individual therapy.

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What are the Working Conditions for Forensic Psychologists?

The working conditions for a forensic psychologist can be challenging. Many spend their time in prisons, assessing and interacting with people who may not yet want their help. Their assessments are often used as witness testimony in court cases, probation hearings or tribunals so they can spend time in these formal settings regularly. In addition to these assessments, which are typically carried out on a one-to-one basis, they can also spend time with groups of offenders together, running rehabilitation programs.

During all their activities in prisons, forensic psychologists have to obey strict prison rules and will usually have to be searched upon entry and their activities are often filmed. Additionally, they have to be comfortable with an often noisy and disrupted prison environment – this can lead to it being quite a stressful workplace.

In addition though, forensic psychologists also work within the community, in probation programs, in hospitals or talking to victims of crime or professionals within the criminal justice system. Despite it typically being a 9am – 5pm job, the working conditions for a forensic psychologist can be varied, challenging and often unpredictable.

Why are Forensic Psychologists Important?

Police officers that solve crimes are very good at paying attention to various cues in a crime scene. Still, they are not experts in the human mind. Forensic psychologists help police officers close cases by explaining what kind of a person would be most likely to commit a certain type of crime and what their background could be like. This helps officers narrow down their list of suspects and helps them focus on those most likely to have committed the crime under investigation.

Forensic Psychologists also help the court system by assessing or diagnosing people being suspected of committing a crime. This is important as it allows the court system to determine whether a person can be held responsible for his or her actions while committing a crime. Forensic psychologist can also help by assessing how likely it is that a person who has committed a certain crime is going to repeat the same offense if released. Knowing what dangers an individual could pose to society is invaluable to the court system.

Forensic psychologists are also frequently called to testify in court. A judge might ask a forensic psychologist to tell what kinds of things he should take into account when deciding what the sentence of a criminal should be.

Many people think that forensic people only work with criminals, however, they also frequently help the victims of various crimes. For example, in a child abuse case, a forensic psychologist might help a child to testify in court or to make it easier for an assault victim to recover after being abused.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND EDUCATION IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

HOW TO BECOME A FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGIST…..?

Steps to Becoming a Forensic Psychologist

1. Obtain a bachelor's degree. ...
2. Get a master's degree in forensic psychology (if necessary) ...
3. Pursue a law degree (optional) ...
4. Earn a doctorate psychology degree. ...
5. Obtain state licensure. ...
6. Become board certified.

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The profession of forensic psychology combines psychology and law. As a forensic psychologist, you will apply your skills to assess criminal offenders, assist inmates with their mental needs, and consult with law enforcement personnel and attorneys. You may also conduct research that focuses on the relationship between the law and psychology.[1] In order to become a forensic psychologist, you will need to first understand what is required and expected of the role. You will then need to attain the necessary education and credentials, and then look for a position.

1. UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE

- ✓ **Be aware of the professional expectations of the role.** The role of a forensic psychology has several aspects. You may be used in a criminal case to narrow down a suspect list or uncover evidence of a crime. You may also prevent crime by participating in the rehabilitation of criminals and conduct research on methods to reduce criminal activity.[2]

- You will need to have solid knowledge of psychological theory and practice as well as knowledge of the criminal justice system. You may be required to offer testimony in a court case as an expert witness and you may also offer expertise on issues in the private sphere, such as advice on personal injury, liability, disability, or guardianship.
- You may also evaluate and treat criminals, as well as families that are involved in abuse or neglect cases. You may work with victims as well as potential offenders and past offenders. Keep in mind that though you will be expected to analyze and assess criminals, you will not be expected to do criminal profiling. Many forensic psychologists do some form of profiling, but it is often more broad and general.

- ✓ **Recognize the traits of a good forensic psychologist.** Though you will need to be able to fulfill all the professional expectations of the role, you will also need to display certain traits to become successful as a forensic psychologist. In addition to maintaining a professional demeanor while working, you should also be able to perform certain intrapersonal skills, such as

- Problem solving: You should be proactive about coming up with solutions to a problem quickly and efficiently. You may need to change tactics mid-conversation as you talk to criminal suspects or testify in a courtroom and should be able to do this fluidly and easily.
- Patience and diligence: Forensic psychology research can be time consuming and may require more than one approach or attempt at a solution. You will also need to be diligent about talking to suspects multiple times or in different ways. In these situations, you will need to demonstrate patience and resolve in your role as you interview suspects and analyze your research.
- Strong observational skills: As a forensic psychologist, you will need to be observant of suspects as you question them so you can quickly deduce their motivation and their demeanor. You should also watch them closely as they respond to your questions and focus on key aspects that will help you build a better profile of them.
- People skills: In this role, you will be forced to work with many different individuals, from law enforcement officials like police to legal representatives like attorneys and judges. You will also need to engage with victims and criminals on an almost daily basis. Maintaining strong communication skills will allow you to navigate these relationships successfully.

- ✓ **Keep in mind the work environment and the pay scale.** As a forensic psychologist, you may work in a variety of settings, such as police stations, courthouses, law firms, prisons, and juvenile detention centers. You may also work as a consultant and work from home or from an office.

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- Forensic psychology is considered a growing field and has risen in popularity due to television and film depictions of forensic psychologists. Salaries for forensic psychologist are often similar to traditional psychologist, who can earn around $86,000. A forensic psychologist salary can range from $68,000 to $90,000, depending on what area you work in and your level of expertise. If you become a consultant and are self-employed, you may earn a higher pay grade.

2. GETTING NECESSARY EDUCATION

- ✓ **Earn a bachelor's degree in psychology, with a minor in criminal justice or criminology.** You can major in psychology or you can major in criminal justice or neuroscience if it is offered at your chosen university. Your undergraduate education should focus on classes in psychology, criminology and forensics. Most undergraduate forensics psychology degrees take four years to complete.
  - Most psychology bachelor's degrees cover a number of core psychology subjects such as the history of psychology, developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, social psychology, abnormal or clinical psychology, and psychology statistics and research methods.
  - You may also take psychology electives that focus on personality psychology, educational psychology, and evolutionary psychology. You will also be required to take general coursework like math, science, art, composition, and literature.

- ✓ **Get a master's degree in forensics psychology.** Forensic psychologists are expected to have a master's degree and a doctorate degree. Some doctoral programs will accept applicants with only a bachelor's degree in psychology, but most doctoral degrees will require a master's degree as well. A master's degree in forensic psychology will allow you to delve into applying forensic psychology in a mental health setting and in the community, plan programs and learn how to conduct evaluations in the field, and get a better sense of the relationship between psychology and the legal system.
  - Most master's degree programs take two years of full-time study or longer if you are a part-time student. Unlike your undergraduate degree, your master's degree studies will be very concentrated and you will only be required to take courses in your focus area. You will do coursework in psychology and law, psychological profiling, psychology and conflict management, social and behavioral psychology, criminal behavior, and diversity and psychology.

- ✓ **Pass the licensing exam in your state.** All states require licensing in order to practice as a forensic psychologist. The requirements will vary from state to state but all candidates should pass a licensure exam.
  - Talk to your doctorate program advisor about the licensure exam in your state and the contents of the licensure exam so you are prepared to take it when you complete your doctorate degree.

- ✓ **Become board certified through the American Board of Forensic Psychology.** It is strongly recommended that you become board certified as a forensic psychologist through the American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP), which is overseen by the American Board of Professional Psychology. To qualify for the ABFP certification, you must have a doctoral degree from a professional psychology program and be licensed to practice in your state. You must also complete at least 100 hours of formal education and 1,000 hours of practical experience in the field.
  - To become board certified, you must take certification examination that consists of a written section, two practice samples, and an oral section. The written section contains 197 multiple choice questions that test the depth and breadth of your forensic knowledge. You will then need to submit

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two practice samples that will be reviewed and used for the oral section of the exam. The oral section will require you discuss and analyze the two practice samples to demonstrate your understanding of forensic ethics and the relationship between the law and forensics.

3. FINDING A POSITION

- ✓ **Look for a postdoctoral fellowship.** The job market for psychology can be competitive, so a postdoctoral position, or a "postdoc", can help to boost your credentials and make you more appealing to employers. If you are more research focused in your forensic psychology studies, you may apply for postdocs available at major universities in your area and across the country.[13]
  - Most postdoctoral fellowships last for one to two years and require you to work on grant-funded research at a large university.
- ✓ **Consider applying for a position through your doctoral internship.** If you completed an internship at an educational facility or a legal facility during your doctoral degree, you may consider using your connections there to try to land a paid position. Creating strong professional ties with your supervisors and contacts during your internship could help to expose you to career opportunities once you complete your doctorate degree.

- ✓ **Apply for positions in the legal system.** If you hoping to work in the legal system, you may want to apply for positions in settings like prisons, rehabilitation facilities, law firms, police departments, and local and state government agencies. Often, as a newly hired psychologist, you will need to complete on the job training under a supervisor before you can go out into the field.
  - When applying for positions in the legal system, you should stress your intrapersonal skills, such as your observational skills, your communication skills, your problem solving skills, and your ability to analyse forensic information. You should also list your complete educational background and any internships or postdoc fellowships you have completed. You should include your dissertation topic in your resume, especially if it relates to forensic psychology in a legal setting.

PROFESSIONAL FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY TRAINING INVOLVES ……..

A. Knowledge of the basic principles of the legal system, including how the legal system works, legal doctrines that are relevant for mental health evaluations, as well as core legal cases relevant to Forensic Psychology and their implications for practice, covering the breadth of forensic psychology;
B. knowledge of forensic psychological evaluation methods, including specialized assessment instruments used in forensic psychological practice;
C. knowledge of, and practice consistent with, the Specialty Guidelines for Forensic Psychologists and the Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct for Psychologists;
D. knowledge of rules, procedures, and techniques related to expert witness testimony;
E. attainment of advanced skill in providing forensic psychological services sufficient to practice on an independent basis; these skills must be demonstrated in at least two distinct areas of forensic psychological practice (see Appendix A), and must include the following:
   1. ability to conduct a forensic interview;
   2. ability to use and interpret structured assessment instruments;
   3. ability to obtain the relevant data, including collateral sources of information;
   4. ability to integrate results and formulate interpretations consistent with data, relevant for the conclusions related to the legal question, and consistent with ethical and practice guidelines;

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5. ability to write reports that are clear, comprehensive, articulate and appropriately focused on the referral issue;
6. ability to provide expert testimony in a clear, articulate manner, consistent with ethical and practice guidelines.

F. demonstration of ability to critically evaluate research and how it applies to forensic practice;
G. eligibility for state or provincial licensure or certification for the independent practice of psychology;
H. eligibility for board certification in Forensic Psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology.

The last two criteria require that the training include sufficient practical experience and supervision in order to meet licensure and certification requirements. The first six criteria are competency-based and must be formally assessed. Such formal assessment should include documentation of both the knowledge component as well as assessment of quality of forensic practice. Assessment of the didactic component can be accomplished either through written or oral examination, with the Residency program specifying the required passing score. Assessment of quality of forensic practice will require formal assessment, by qualified mental health professionals (including at least one qualified Psychologist), of the elements delineated above.

ETHICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY

1. Accurately represent his/her education, training, experience, and areas of expertise.
2. Pursue professional competency through training, proficiency testing, certification, and presentation and publication of research findings.
3. Commit to continuous learning in the forensic disciplines and stay abreast of new findings, equipment and techniques.
4. Promote validation and incorporation of new technologies, guarding against the use of non-valid methods in casework and the misapplication of validated methods.
5. Avoid tampering, adulteration, loss, or unnecessary consumption of evidentiary materials.
6. Avoid participation in any case where there are personal, financial, employment-related or other conflicts of interest.
7. Conduct full, fair and unbiased examinations, leading to independent, impartial, and objective opinions and conclusions.
8. Make and retain full, contemporaneous, clear and accurate written records of all examinations and tests conducted and conclusions drawn, in sufficient detail to allow meaningful review and assessment by an independent person competent in the field.
9. Base conclusions on generally-accepted procedures supported by sufficient data, standards and controls, not on political pressure or other outside influence.
10. Do not render conclusions that are outside one's expertise.
11. Prepare reports in unambiguous terms, clearly distinguishing data from interpretations and opinions, and disclosing all known associated limitations that prevent invalid inferences or mislead the judge or jury.
12. Do not alter reports or other records, or withhold information from reports for strategic or tactical litigation advantage.
13. Present accurate and complete data in reports, oral and written presentations and testimony based on good scientific practices and validated methods.
14. Communicate honestly and fully, once a report is issued, with all parties (investigators, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and other expert witnesses), unless prohibited by law.

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15. Document and notify management or quality assurance personnel of adverse events, such as an unintended mistake or a breach of ethical, legal, scientific standards, or questionable conduct.
16. Ensure reporting, through proper management channels, to all impacted scientific and legal parties of any adverse event that affects a previously issued report or testimony.

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